

The Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division, of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) announces an open competition for the Youth Leadership Program with Sub-Saharan Africa. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) may submit proposals to provide youth and adult participants with three-week exchanges focused on civic education, community service, and youth leadership development, and to support follow-on projects in their home communities. U.S. Embassies in the participating countries will recruit, screen, and select the participants. ECA anticipates

awarding one or two cooperative agreements that will support approximately 100 participants from 10 countries. Exchanges for participants from Anglophone countries will be conducted in English, and exchanges for participants from Francophone countries will be conducted in French. The awards will be contingent upon the availability of FY-2011 funds.

I. Funding Opportunity Description:

Authority:

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The

funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

Overview:

The Youth Leadership Program with Sub-Saharan Africa is a three-week exchange for high school youth and adult educators focused on civic education, community service, and youth leadership development. Subthemes that explore these overarching themes may be added, such as business and entrepreneurship, the environment, public health, or other topics relevant to the participating African countries. Participants engage in a variety of activities such as workshops on leadership and service, community site visits related to the program themes and subthemes, interactive training, presentations, visits to high schools, local cultural activities, and other activities designed to achieve the program's stated goals. Multiple opportunities for participants to interact meaningfully with their American peers must be included. Follow-on activities with the participants are an integral part of the program, as the students apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired by planning service projects in their home communities.

The goals of the program are to:

- 1) Promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of Africa;
- 2) Prepare youth leaders to become responsible citizens and contributing members of their communities; and
- 3) Foster relationships among youth from different ethnic, religious, and national groups.

The objectives of the program are for participants to:

- 1) Demonstrate a better understanding of the elements of a participatory democracy as practiced in the United States;
- 2) Demonstrate critical thinking and leadership skills; and
- 3) Demonstrate skill at developing project ideas and planning a course of action to bring the projects to fruition.

The primary themes of the program are:

- 1) Civic Education (Citizen Participation, Grassroots Democracy and Rule of Law);
- 2) Community Service; and
- 3) Youth Leadership Development.

For each project, applicant organizations must focus on these primary themes. Secondary themes, such as business and entrepreneurship, the environment, public health, or other topics relevant to the participating African countries, will serve to illustrate the more abstract concepts of the primary themes. For example, the secondary theme of the environment can be used to examine how a group of individuals with an idea can start a recycling campaign in their community.

Using these goals, objectives, and themes, applicant organizations should identify their own specific and measurable outputs and outcomes based on the project specifications provided in this solicitation. Proposals should indicate how recipients will achieve the short-term program objectives, and how these objectives will contribute to the achievement of the stated long-term goals.

Project Options:

The amount of funding available is approximately \$550,000, pending the availability of funds. ECA anticipates awarding one or two cooperative agreements for the management of the Youth Leadership Program with Sub-Saharan

Africa. One project will be conducted in English for 40 participants from four Anglophone countries of Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Tanzania; one project will be conducted in French for 60 participants from six Francophone countries of Burkina Faso, Chad, Cote D'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal project configurations, budgets, and participant numbers in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. In addition, the Bureau reserves the right to adjust the participating countries should conditions change in the partner country or if other countries are identified as Department priorities. Organizations may apply for the Anglophone countries project, the Francophone countries project, or for both project options, but must submit only one proposal under this competition. Multiple submissions will be declared technically ineligible and will not be considered further in the review process. Please note the approximate funding for each option. The Bureau suggests a per capita cost between \$5,000 and \$6,000 for this program (applicants need not budget for participant international airfare). The Francophone countries project per capita costs may fall in

the upper range due to the added cost for French interpretation.

Option 1: Anglophone countries (approximately \$220,000)

A regional project conducted in English for 40 participants from Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, and Tanzania.

Approximately 10 participants (8 youth and 2 adults) from each participating country will travel to the United States.

Option 2: Francophone countries (approximately \$330,000)

A regional project conducted in French for 60 participants from Burkina Faso, Chad, Cote D'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger. Approximately 10 participants (8 youth and 2 adults) from each participating country will travel to the United States. French language interpreters must be provided for U.S. programming.

For Both Options:

Regional projects should include activities where participants from several countries interact to share ideas and work on program themes during the U.S. exchange. However, not all delegations must travel to the United States at the same time. It is suitable to break them up

into smaller sub-groups, but should keep a mix of participants from several countries. Applicants who propose to host a large delegation in the United States at one time must propose a plan to break it into smaller cohorts for most of the exchange activities. Applicants are encouraged to be creative and flexible in making arrangements that will help meet our program goals.

Participants:

U.S. Embassies in the participating countries will recruit, screen, and select the participants; the award recipient will not be involved in participant selection. The youth participants will be high school students aged 15 to 18 years old with at least one semester of high school remaining. The adult participants may be teachers, trainers, school administrators, and/or community leaders who work with youth. They will have the dual role of both exchange participant and chaperone. The Anglophone participants will be proficient in the English language. The Francophone participants will not be required to have English proficiency; the award recipient must provide French language interpretation and place the participants in host families where at least one member speaks French.

Where possible, U.S. Embassy staff will seek adult educators with some English ability.

Organizational Capacity:

Applicant organizations must demonstrate their capacity for conducting international youth exchanges, focusing on three areas of competency: (1) provision of projects that address the goals, objectives, and themes outlined in this document; (2) age-appropriate programming for youth; and (3) previous experience working on programs in the region. Applicants need not have organizational capacity in the participating countries, as the U.S. Embassies will serve as the in-country partner.

U.S. Embassy Involvement:

U.S. Embassies in the participating countries will recruit, screen, and select the participants; provide pre-departure briefings; facilitate visas; arrange international travel to the United States; and oversee follow-on alumni projects. Once a cooperative agreement is awarded, the recipient must consult regularly with the Public Affairs Section at the U.S. Embassy in the partner country to implement the project.

Guidelines:

Pending the availability of funds, it is anticipated that the cooperative agreement will begin on or about September 1, 2011. The award period will be 12 to 18 months in duration, as appropriate for the applicant's program design. Planning and preparation will start in 2011, and the exchanges will take place sometime between November 2011 and December 2012. Applicants should propose the period of the exchange(s) in their proposals, but the exact timing may be altered through the mutual agreement of the Department of State and the award recipient.

The award recipient will be responsible for the following:

Orientations: Provide pre-departure materials and information about the U.S. program to help the U.S. Embassies, participants, and their families in preparation for the exchange. Also, provide orientations for those participating from the host communities, including host families.

Logistics: Manage all logistical arrangements, including French language interpretation as appropriate, domestic

travel, ground transportation, accommodations, group meals, and disbursement of stipends.

Exchange Activities: Design and plan three weeks of exchange activities that provide a creative and substantive program that develops both the youth and the adult participants' knowledge and skill base in civic education, community service, and youth leadership development. The exchange will take place in no more than two or three locations so that the participants have time to familiarize themselves with a community. The exchange will focus primarily on interactive activities, practical experiences, and other hands-on opportunities that provide a substantive project on the specified program themes. Some activities should be school and/or community-based, and the projects will involve as much sustained interaction with peers of the host country as possible (for both the youth and adult participants). Cultural, social, and recreational activities will balance the schedule. Applicants may choose to include a visit to Washington, D.C.

Accommodations: Arrange home stays for the participants in the United States with properly screened and briefed American families for the majority of the exchange period.

Criminal background checks must be conducted for members of host families (and others living in the home) who are 18 years or older. Please see the POGI for more details on host family screening and placement.

Monitoring: Develop and implement a plan to monitor the participants' safety and well-being while on the exchange and to create opportunities for participants to share potential issues and resolve them promptly. The award recipient will be required to provide proper staff supervision and facilitation to ensure that the teenagers have safe and pedagogically rich programs. Staff, along with the adult participants, will assist the youth with cultural adjustments, provide societal context to enhance learning, and counsel students as needed.

Follow-on Activities: Plan and implement activities in the participants' home countries, in coordination with the U.S. Embassies, particularly by facilitating continued engagement among the participants, advising and supporting them in the implementation of community service projects, and offering opportunities to reinforce the ideas, values and skills imparted during the exchange. Exchange participants should return home from the exchange prepared

to conduct projects that serve a need in their schools or communities. To amplify program impact, proposals should present creative and effective ways to address the project themes, for both program participants and their peers.

Evaluation: Design and implement an evaluation plan that assesses the short- and medium-term impact of the project on the participants as well as on host and home communities.

Please note:

In a cooperative agreement, the Department of State is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine grant monitoring. The Department's activities and responsibilities for the Youth Leadership Program with Sub-Saharan Africa are as follows:

- 1) Provide advice and assistance in the execution of all program components.
- 2) Manage the recruitment and selection of the participants, arrange and purchase international travel, provide pre-departure briefings, and oversee follow-on activities.

- 3) Issue DS-2019 forms and J-1 visas. All foreign participants will travel on a U.S. Government designation for the J Exchange Visitor Program.
- 4) Facilitate interaction within the Department of State, to include ECA, the regional bureaus, and overseas posts.
- 5) Arrange meetings with Department of State officials in Washington, D.C. and the participating countries.
- 6) Approve publicity materials and final calendar of exchange activities.
- 7) Monitor and evaluate the program, through regular communication with the award recipient and possibly one or more site visits.

Additional Information:

Award recipients will retain the name "Youth Leadership Program" to identify their project. All materials, publicity, and correspondence related to the program will acknowledge this as a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. The Bureau will retain copyright use of and be allowed to distribute materials related to this program as it sees fit.

The organization must inform the ECA Program Officer and participating U.S. Embassies of their progress at each stage of the project's implementation in a timely fashion, and will be required to obtain approval of any significant program changes in advance of their implementation.

Proposals must demonstrate how the stated objectives will be met. The proposal narrative should provide detailed information on the major project activities, and applicants should explain and justify their programmatic choices. Projects must comply with J-1 visa regulations for the International Visitor and Government Visitor category. Please be sure to refer to the complete Solicitation Package - this RFGP, the Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI), and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) - for further information.

II. Award Information:

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under Section I above.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY-2011

Approximate Total Funding: \$550,000

Approximate Number of Awards: one or two

Floor of Award Range: \$200,000

Ceiling of Award Range: \$550,000

Anticipated Award Date: Pending availability of funds,
September 1, 2011

Anticipated Project Completion Date: 12-18 months after
start date, to be specified by applicant based on project
plan

III.) Eligibility Information:

III.1. Eligible applicants: Applications may be submitted
by public and private non-profit organizations meeting the
provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26
USC 501(c) (3) .

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds: There is no minimum
or maximum percentage required for this competition.
However, the Bureau encourages applicants to provide
maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of
its programs.

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed
that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing
as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an

approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with OMB Circular A-110, (Revised), Subpart C.23 - Cost Sharing and Matching. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

III.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:

a.) Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$60,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making multiple awards in amounts exceeding \$60,000 to support program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program.

Therefore, organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition. The Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

b.) Proposed sub-award recipients are also limited to grant funding of \$60,000 or less if they do not have four years of experience in conducting international exchanges.

c.) The Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

d.) Organizations may submit only one proposal (total) under this competition. If multiple proposals are received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared technically ineligible and will be given no further consideration in the review process. Please note: Applicant organizations are defined by their legal name, and EIN number as stated on their completed SF-424 and additional supporting documentation outlined in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document.

IV.) Application and Submission Information:

Note: Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

IV.1 Contact Information to Request an Application Package:

Please contact the Youth Programs Division, ECA/PE/C/PY, SA-5, 3rd Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, by telephone (202) 632-9352, fax (202) 632-9355, or email PhillipsJA@state.gov to request a Solicitation Package. Please refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/PE/C/PY-11-31 located at the top of this announcement when making your request.

Alternatively, an electronic application package may be obtained from grants.gov. Please see section IV.3f for further information.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document which consists of required application forms, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation. It also contains the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document, which provides specific information, award criteria and budget instructions tailored to this competition.

Please specify Program Officer Jennifer Phillips and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/PE/C/PY-11-31 located

at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

IV.2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet:

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website at

<http://exchanges.state.gov/grants/open2.html>, or from the Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov>. Please read all information before downloading.

IV.3. Content and Form of Submission: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The application should be submitted per the instructions under IV.3f. "Application Deadline and Methods of Submission" section below.

IV.3a. You are required to have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a DUNS number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a DUNS number, access <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your DUNS number is

included in the appropriate box of the SF - 424 which is part of the formal application package.

IV.3b. All proposals must contain an executive summary, proposal narrative and budget.

Please Refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document and the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document for additional formatting and technical requirements.

IV.3c. You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

- 1) Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

- 2) Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

If your organization is a private nonprofit which has not received a grant or cooperative agreement from ECA in the past three years, or if your organization received nonprofit status from the IRS within the past four years, you must submit the necessary documentation to verify nonprofit status as directed in the PSI document. Failure

to do so will cause your proposal to be declared technically ineligible.

IV.3d. Please take into consideration the following information when preparing your proposal narrative:

IV.3d.1 Adherence To All Regulations Governing The J Visa

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is the official program sponsor of the exchange program covered by this RFGP, and an employee of the Bureau will be the "Responsible Officer" for the program under the terms of 22 CFR 62, which covers the administration of the Exchange Visitor Program (J visa program). Under the terms of 22 CFR 62, organizations receiving awards (either a grant or cooperative agreement) under this RFGP will be third parties "cooperating with or assisting the sponsor in the conduct of the sponsor's program." The actions of recipient organizations shall be "imputed to the sponsor in evaluating the sponsor's compliance with" 22 CFR 62. Therefore, the Bureau expects that any organization receiving an award under this competition will render all assistance necessary to enable the Bureau to fully comply with 22 CFR 62 et seq.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by recipient organizations and program participants to all regulations governing the J visa program status. Therefore, proposals should explicitly state in writing that the applicant is prepared to assist the Bureau in meeting all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62. If your organization has experience as a designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor, the applicant should discuss their record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et. seq., including the oversight of their Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of ECA will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://exchanges.state.gov> or from:

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
ECA/EC/D/PS, SA-5, 5th Floor
2200 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

IV.3d.2 Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of American political, social, and cultural life. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including, but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, and disabilities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to adhere to the advancement of this principle both in program administration and in program content. Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support for Diversity' section for specific suggestions on

incorporating diversity into your proposal. Public Law 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," the Bureau "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106 - 113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

IV.3d.3. Program Monitoring and Evaluation

Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that your proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. The Bureau expects that the recipient organization will track participants or partners and be able to respond to key evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the

program, learning as a result of the program, changes in behavior as a result of the program, and effects of the program on institutions (institutions in which participants work or partner institutions). The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depend heavily on setting clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a program. Your evaluation plan should include a description of your project's objectives, your anticipated project outcomes, and how and when you intend to measure these outcomes (performance indicators). The more that outcomes are "smart" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. You should also show how your project objectives link to the goals of the program described in this RFGP.

Your monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly distinguish between program outputs and outcomes. Outputs are products and services delivered, often stated as an amount. Output information is important to show the scope or size of project activities, but it cannot substitute for

information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of people trained or the number of seminars conducted. Outcomes, in contrast, represent specific results a project is intended to achieve and is usually measured as an extent of change. Findings on outputs and outcomes should both be reported, but the focus should be on outcomes.

We encourage you to assess the following four levels of outcomes, as they relate to the program goals set out in the RFGP (listed here in increasing order of importance):

1. **Participant satisfaction** with the program and exchange experience.
2. **Participant learning**, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.
3. **Participant behavior**, concrete actions to apply knowledge in work or community; greater participation and responsibility in civic organizations; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained; continued contacts between participants, community members, and others.

4. **Institutional changes**, such as increased collaboration and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and organizational improvements.

Please note: Consideration should be given to the appropriate timing of data collection for each level of outcome. For example, satisfaction is usually captured as a short-term outcome, whereas behavior and institutional changes are normally considered longer-term outcomes.

Overall, the quality of your monitoring and evaluation plan will be judged on how well it 1) specifies intended outcomes; 2) gives clear descriptions of how each outcome will be measured; 3) identifies when particular outcomes will be measured; and 4) provides a clear description of the data collection strategies for each outcome (i.e., surveys, interviews, or focus groups). (Please note that evaluation plans that deal only with the first level of outcomes [satisfaction] will be deemed less competitive under the present evaluation criteria.)

Recipient organizations will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. All data collected, including

survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

IV.3e. Please take the following information into consideration when preparing your budget:

IV.3e.1. Applicants must submit SF-424A - "Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs" along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification. Please refer to the Solicitation Package (POGI and PSI) for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

IV.3f. Application Deadline and Methods of Submission:

Application Deadline Date: April 14, 2011

Reference Number: ECA/PE/C/PY-11-31

Methods of Submission:

Applications may be submitted in one of two ways:

- 1.) In hard-copy, via a nationally recognized overnight delivery service (i.e., Federal Express,

UPS, Airborne Express, or U.S. Postal Service Express Overnight Mail, etc.), or

2.) electronically through <http://www.grants.gov>.

Along with the Project Title, all applicants must enter the above Reference Number in Box 11 on the SF-424 contained in the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) of the solicitation document.

IV.3f.1 Submitting Printed Applications

Applications must be shipped no later than the above deadline. Delivery services used by applicants must have in-place, centralized shipping identification and tracking systems that may be accessed via the Internet and delivery people who are identifiable by commonly recognized uniforms and delivery vehicles. Proposals shipped on or before the above deadline but received at ECA more than seven days after the deadline will be ineligible for further consideration under this competition. Proposals shipped after the established deadlines are ineligible for consideration under this competition. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of application. It is each applicant's responsibility to ensure that each package is marked with a

legible tracking number and to monitor/confirm delivery to ECA via the Internet. Delivery of proposal packages may not be made via local courier service or in person for this competition. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Only proposals submitted as stated above will be considered.

Important note: When preparing your submission please make sure to include one extra copy of the completed SF-424 form and place it in an envelope addressed to "ECA/EX/PM".

The original and six (6) copies of the application should be sent to:

Program Management Division, ECA-IIP/EX/PM

Ref.: ECA/PE/C/PY-11-31

SA-5, Floor 4

Department of State

2200 C Street, NW

Washington, D.C. 20037

Applicants submitting hard-copy applications must also submit the Executive Summary, Proposal Narrative, and Budget sections of the proposal, as well as any attachments

essential to understanding the program, in Microsoft Word and/or Excel format on CD-ROM. As appropriate, the Bureau will provide these files electronically to Public Affairs Sections at the U.S. Embassies for their review.

IV.3f.2 - Submitting Electronic Applications

Applicants have the option of submitting proposals electronically through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the "Find" portion of the system.

PLEASE NOTE: ECA bears no responsibility for applicant timeliness of submission or data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via Grants.gov

Please follow the instructions available in the 'Get Started' portion of the site (<http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>).

Several of the steps in the Grants.gov registration process could take several weeks. Therefore, applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations

immediately after reviewing this RFGP to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov.

Once registered, the amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. In addition, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

The Grants.gov website includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "For Applicants" section of the website. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov website, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system. ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission to:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800 -518-4726

Business Hours: Monday - Friday, 7AM - 9PM Eastern Time

Email: support@grants.gov

Applicants have until midnight (12:00 a.m.), Washington, DC time of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. There are no exceptions to the above deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after midnight of the application deadline date will be automatically rejected by the grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.

Please refer to the Grants.gov website, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation.

Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Again, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline

to begin the submission process through Grants.gov. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov web portal to ensure that proposals have been received by Grants.gov in their entirety, and ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

IV.3g. Intergovernmental Review of Applications: Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

V. Application Review Information

V.1. REVIEW PROCESS

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be

reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (cooperative agreements) resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

REVIEW CRITERIA

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below.

1. Quality of the program idea: Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan. The proposed program should be creative, age-appropriate, respond to the design outlined in the solicitation, and demonstrate originality. It should be clearly and accurately written, substantive, and with sufficient detail. Proposals should also include a plan to support participants' community activities upon their return home.

2. Program planning: A detailed agenda and work plan should clearly demonstrate how project objectives would be achieved. The agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. The substance of

workshops, seminars, presentations, school-based activities, and/or site visits should be described in detail.

3. Support of diversity: The proposal should demonstrate the recipient's commitment to promoting the awareness and understanding of diversity in participant recruitment and selection and in program content. Applicants should demonstrate readiness to accommodate participants with physical disabilities.

4. Institutional capacity and track record: Proposed personnel and institutional resources in both the United States and in the partner countries should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program goals. The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau awards as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

5. Program evaluation: The proposal should include a plan to evaluate the program's success in meeting its goals, both as the activities unfold and after they have been completed. The proposal should include a draft survey

questionnaire or other technique, plus a description of a methodology to link outcomes to original project objectives. The award recipient will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded.

6. Cost-effectiveness and cost sharing: The applicant should demonstrate efficient use of Bureau funds. The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. The proposal should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions, which demonstrates institutional and community commitment.

VI.) Award Administration Information

VI.1 Award Notices:

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the

U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and mailed to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the ECA program office coordinating this competition.

VI.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following:

Office of Management and Budget Circular A 122, "Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations."

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21, "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions."

OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Governments".

OMB Circular No. A 110 (Revised), Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit Organizations.

OMB Circular No. A-102, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants-in-Aid to State and Local Governments.

OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Government, and Non-profit Organizations

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants>

<http://fa.statebuy.state.gov>

VI.3. Reporting Requirements: You must provide ECA with a hard copy original plus one copy of the following reports:

- 1.) A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award;
- 2.) A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. This one-page

report will will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's USAspending.gov website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.

- 3.) A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet with all program reports, including the SF-PPR-E and SF-PPR-F.
- 4.) Quarterly or interim reports, as required in the Bureau cooperative agreement.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to IV.3.d.3 Application and Submission Instructions above for Program Monitoring and Evaluation information.)

All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

All reports must be sent to the ECA Grants Officer and ECA Program Officer listed in the final assistance award document.

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Jennifer Phillips, Youth Programs Division, ECA/PE/C/PY, SA-5, 3rd Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20522-0503, by telephone 202-632-9352, fax 202-632-9355, or e-mail PhillipsJA@state.gov

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and reference number ECA/PE/C/PY-11-31.

Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

VIII. Other Information:**Notice:**

The terms and conditions published in this RFGP are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative.

Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding.

Issuance of the RFGP does not constitute an award

commitment on the part of the Government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section VI.3 above.

Ann Stock

Date

Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
Department of State